

HOUSE RESOLUTION 76  
By Langster

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate Bishop Joseph W. Walker, III, upon the celebration of his 13<sup>th</sup> Pastoral Anniversary with Mount Zion Baptist Church.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should salute those venerable pastors, who, through their great capacity for love, dedication of spirit, and faith in God, have enriched the lives of the people of their respective communities and who have distinguished themselves as community leaders of whom we can all be proud; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Joseph W. Walker, III, is one such extraordinary person; his life and ministry affirms his commitment to the principles of faith, perseverance, and hard work; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Joseph W. Walker will be celebrating a thirteen-year milestone of ministry at the Mount Zion Baptist Church of Nashville, Tennessee, on Sunday, April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2005; and

WHEREAS, born in Shreveport, Louisiana, to Deacon Joseph W. Walker, Jr., and Rosa H. Walker, Joseph Walker was educated at Fair Park High School; and

WHEREAS, graduating with honors with each of his numerous degrees, Bishop Walker received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Southern University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana; his Master of Divinity from Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee; and his Doctor of Ministry from Princeton Theological Seminary. Bishop Walker was baptized, licensed, and ordained in the Mount Canaan Baptist Church of Shreveport, Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, this remarkable professional currently serves ably and faithfully as the pastor of the Mount Zion Baptist Church in Nashville, Tennessee, where he began his pastorate in the spring of 1992 with a small but hopeful congregation of 175 members. Presently, the ministry has grown to over 15,000 and continues to grow at a phenomenal rate; and

WHEREAS, today, the church espouses an impressive seven weekly services in three locations, and under Bishop Walker's leadership, the church engaged in the completion of a \$17 million dollar, state-of-the-art ministry complex that seats 5,000; this is the first phase of a \$60 million dollar, twelve-year project; and

WHEREAS, during Bishop Walker's commendable tenure with Mount Zion, he has been instrumental in the completion of a third church location in Antioch, Tennessee. This \$7 million dollar retail center and ministry complex includes a children's wing and serves as a multipurpose facility that seats 1,600; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Walker has been a pioneer in the use of electronic media and new technology to reach the masses who enjoy his daily radio broadcasts on WNSG and weekly television broadcasts, where the Bishop delivers his message, "A Relevant Word"; and

WHEREAS, under Bishop Walker's leadership, Mount Zion's Dove-nominated choir has recorded three albums entitled *Worship in His Presence*, *Praise in His Presences* and *Shout in the Spirit*; and

WHEREAS, even as Mount Zion's ministry began to expand beyond its original location in the Historic Jefferson Street Corridor, Bishop Walker pledged to never forget the neighborhood where Mount Zion was founded. Because of this pledge, he began an outreach ministry called New Level CDC in 2001, which is an outreach ministry working to revitalize the area by promoting community economic development; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Walker serves with distinction as the Vice-Chairman of New Level CDC, which is committed to impacting the lives of low and moderate income families through housing and homeownership, financial and economic empowerment, government relations, and social services and education; and

WHEREAS, his concern for the growth and edification of God's people extends beyond the Church, and he founded and serves as President of J.W. Walker Ministries, a non-profit organization whose funding is provided by partner gifts and proceeds from speaking engagements and sales from ministry material; and

WHEREAS, this ministry has awarded over the past four years \$198,000 in scholarships. The ministry also provides food weekly to those in need, and sponsors a summer youth enrichment camp; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Walker continued his exemplary dedication to ministry through the founding of the JWW Voices of Zion, a 300-voice youth choir;

WHEREAS, he showcases his outstanding leadership capabilities and talents as President and Chief Operating Officer of Exodus Productions, Incorporated; as an adjunct professor of religion at Tennessee State University; and as the Bishop of Evangelism for the Full Gospel Baptist Church Fellowship; and

WHEREAS, he is a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Incorporated, and also serves on the Boards of Directors for the Nashville Vanderbilt Club and the Nashville Electric Service; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Walker has been recognized with numerous awards and has been featured in several distinguished publications. He is recognized as one of Nashville's twenty-five Most Influential African Americans and is Governor appointed to the State of Tennessee Human Rights Commission; and

WHEREAS, an astute author, Bishop Walker is the author of four books entitled *From Tragedy to Triumph*, *Before You Say, "I Do,"* *Too Blessed to Be Broke*, and *In Pursuit of Purpose*; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Walker, as he has in the past, continues to do remarkable work for the Lord; the recently widowed Bishop Walker and late wife of eleven years, Dr. Diane G. Walker, DDS, worked humbly and diligently together, thereby tremendously blessing their church family by her presence within the lives of the congregation; and

WHEREAS, all of the Mount Zion Baptist Church's good works, performed under the astute leadership of Bishop Walker during the past thirteen years, have been done to the glory of God, as the Church strives to continue reaching out to the community by demonstrating God's agape love; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Walker epitomizes the spirit and high level of commitment that are characteristic of true Tennesseans; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to acknowledge and applaud this individual for his dedication to the State of Tennessee and its citizens; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that that we honor Bishop Joseph W. Walker, III, for his life's work and for his thirteen years of devotion to spreading the Good News at the Mount Zion Baptist Church and join with Bishop Walker and his congregation in celebrating this milestone, as we extend our best wishes for a happy and successful future.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.